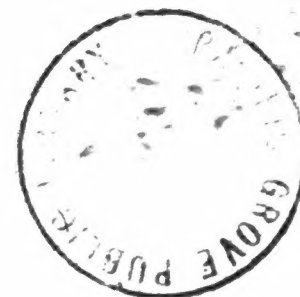


PACIFIC WEEKLY

Apr 2 '40

A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION

MAY 10, 1935



MURDER IN STOCKTON

BY TOM KROMER

**ORGANIZED LABOR AND
CRIMINAL SYNDICALISM**

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A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION

VOLUME II

FRIDAY, MAY 10, 1935

NUMBER 19

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NOTES AND COMMENT

CHARGES on which Paul A. Davis, SERA director in San Francisco, was recently removed are said to have been those of "negligence in attention to duties" while the charges of gross corruption against the director were brought by relief recipients and are at present under investigation.

AFTER three weeks of a stubborn strike in Stockton in which warehousemen were striking for better conditions and recognition of their union, the union leader was killed by the son of a warehouse owner to whom police had issued a permit to carry a pistol a few days previous. On May Day a funeral of some 6,000 people passed in silence before the bier of the slain leader, Ray Morency. It was the biggest funeral that had ever taken place in Stockton.

Four days later the strike was settled with full union recognition.

The authorities are setting a dangerous example of the effectiveness of violence.

RUMORS still persist that Governor Merriam will commute to time served the life sentences of Mooney and Billings. This seems to be the one action that Merriam can take to win the good will of some of the 800,000 Sinclair voters at the last election and the tens of thousands of radical voters and non-voters: one reason Sinclair got the vote he did was because of his promise to free Mooney. The defeat of the anti-red bills in assembly, the recall petition against Merriam which already has 100,000 of the needed 300,000 signatures, the strength of the student anti-war strike, and the growing rank and file movement in labor unions in California is doubtless giving pause to some of the heads of big business. (The Industrial Association should get out a little pamphlet on these matters, instead of reprinting so much old stuff.) It would be ironical to have these two innocent men freed just after the death of their steadfast champion for eighteen years, Fremont Older. But the whole matter is an indication

of the growing strength of the workers' movement in this state.

NOTHING could better illustrate what PACIFIC WEEKLY is driving at than the contribution to its columns appearing this week under the title "White Collar Drift". We ask you to read "White Collar Drift" before we go any further in this reference to it and then come back and read our reasons for printing it.

We are speaking to that very large section of our subscription list and our newsstand readers who are not Communists, but liberals; maybe we are speaking to those who, while they are liberals, are not very strong liberals, have, perhaps, one leg pretty safely hung back over the fence on the side whence they came. We commend "White Collar Drift" to you as the a-bit-too-clever self-analysis of a young man who without doubt is a young man of considerable education and apparent intelligence. We happen to know that he is honest about his feelings in this matter. We ask, as we have asked so many times in the past, what are we going to do with this sort of a young man; what, in fact, are we going to do with his state of mind? He symbolizes with ships. Accepting the symbol, what are we going to do about a ship he'll take another chance on boarding instead of swimming across to this Communist craft? The contention of PACIFIC WEEKLY is that you can't lure this young man any more by singing "The Star Spangled Banner" at him, by quoting the Constitution to him, by harping on American traditions and ideals. We simply can't talk through our hats to this younger generation any longer. We have given him too many concrete examples of our insincerity, of our bungling methods, of our empty promises, of our false concepts. He's drifting, or he was drifting, and now he's begun to swim. If we don't like the direction in which he's swimming; if we don't like the craft he has set as his objective, we've simply got to throw over a life belt. The one we are stuffing with cork today is Fascism and this young man, and his million companions, are going to battle any attempts to throw it around their necks. We must offer a lifesaver that has more assurance of permanent peace and security. Fascism's promised stability is foundationed in blood and turmoil and cruelty and the suppression of liberty. And it will be in turmoil that he will resist it.

TWO men who had gone down to defend the workers charged with murder in the Gallup unemployed demonstration, when a sheriff and two workers were killed, were kidnapped from the main square last week, taken into the desert, across the State line, beaten, and left with their heads tied in sacks to wander about dazed until an Indian picked them up and took them to a hospital. The vigilante heroes, nine to two, wore green hoods and abducted the two men in broad daylight in three cars which had no license plates.

It is hard to believe the authorities were not in league with them, in view of the difficulty anyone else has in driving without license plates.

There was a miscalculation on the part of the vigilantes, however. The two men kidnapped were Robert Minor and David Levinson, a Philadelphia lawyer for the I. L. D. Minor is a renowned artist and Communist, one of the bravest men in this country. You don't do that to him. If the masked he-

roes thought to frighten this couple they made a mistake. The couple returned to Gallup next day and now they sit with pistols in their laps as they work, and an armed bodyguard, provided immediately by the Governor of New Mexico, at their backs. The protests from all over the country at the outrage must have amazed the little New Mexico town. Minor used to be a fearless journalist on the St. Louis Post-Dispatch; he is one of the most talented, esteemed and beloved men in the radical movement. He left his art to help organize the workers of America for a better life. Nine masked hoodlums in Gallup, New Mexico, will hardly stop him.

These kidnapers are probably liable under the Lindbergh Law to the death sentence. They will not be found, of course, any more than the Salinas farmers who burned the Filipino ranch houses and terrorized the Filipino lettuce pickers last year were brought to justice. But perhaps the public will have had some scales removed from its eyes as to who believes in force and violence in this country, who has contempt for law and who believes in cowardly and subversive activities. We wonder why the patriotic American Legion has not come forward to denounce these men and their menace to true Americanism? Or can it be that the Legion approves such action?

LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

SPRING IS having a hard time a-borning this year.

THE VENT on the earth's surface called Mt. Ararat—where the ark landed—opened up again after years of rest and there are 2,000 dead, many more hurt and homeless.

MUSSOLINI SAYS Hitler is bluffing successfully, getting most of what he wants without war. I don't know these dictators very well, but they know themselves and when the Fascist Duce interprets the Nazi Fuehrer so comfortably we can accept it in that spirit. Europe can't, of course; too jittery, too aware of war-like conditions and the needs of war-mongers, but Carmelites can be bold if they dare and desire.

A WAG in the publishing business said: "We don't publish all these books because we want to. We do it to keep our competitors from publishing 'em."

PROSPERITY IS here; the President says so. And there are other signs. The U. S. Chamber of Commerce Harriman demands that the President get down and let the business men ride and drive all alone by themselves. Hearst and other business men are growing equally cocky. When you remember how recently they were hollering for help and hiding their faces in intelligent (almost) shame you can see that there is a change and if not prosperity some profit is in sight somewhere. Business men can't run business, of course; they never have for any length of time. They think business is something for them to make profits on. I remember years ago I went around asking for a railroad manager who knew that railroads exist to carry freight and passengers; I needed an interview with such a man. The Street said there was no

such animal. There were railroad men who once did read or think that, but they were all gone. With the guys that thought of a grocery store for groceries or a lumber yard for lumber or music for art's sake.

SEEMS TO me as a patriot, that it's a good thing for business men and taxpayers to keep badgering teachers, as they are in San Francisco and Seaside and elsewhere everywhere. The teachers don't like it; they hate to be always on the defense, but they, with their trained intelligence, must see that these leading citizens in their dumb way are keeping the teachers of children from settling down into a sense of security like parents. They are making sure that the trainers of their young shall bring the new generation up with some idea of what's what. The teachers should be, not patient exactly, but grimly aware all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds.

THE CALL for a Labor Party, in this bi-partisan country, is a move toward a second, not a third party, as some unhappy people seem to think. A third party would be bad, very bad: confusing and quite unnecessary. We have got along with two parties so far. The trouble with us now is that we begin to see that both the old parties, Republican and Democratic, represent at bottom the same thing—I might almost say—the same damn Thing. That Thing is business. The emerging idea now is to have a second party that would represent another interest, like labor and farming, which are beginning to see that Business is not but only wants to be the whole Thing. I might almost say the whole damned Thing. Workers and earners are opening their eyes to see that Business, no matter how much it tries, cannot see and serve everybody, specially not Labor. Indeed, the discovery is that the interests of Business and Labor conflict. Higher wages would increase the purchasing power Business demands and actually sees the need of, but the business men and Labor both are realizing that the need of profits comes first and there seems to be some sort of conflict between profits and wages under our system. (There wouldn't have to be.) And worse than that—or better than that—the rest of us, the public, are on the verge of discovering that our interest is with Labor and the farmers, not with Business. And the reason for that is that there is an old split that is getting to be so clear that even a business man can see it. It's the split between business and Big Business.

Anyhow it looks as if we could and would soon be merging the Democratic and Republican parties, as quite enough for Business, and building a true second party to represent labor, dirt farmers and consumers into one big party to be called the Labor Party, the American Labor Party.

OUR LOCAL Chamber of Commerce will not stand up with the National Chamber to fight the President and so breaks the united front of business! That's bad. Shows a misunderstanding of the fundamental principle that business men are for the American Government and recovery and prosperity only when these good things recognize business and business graft, first. Monterey business men and editors are misled by the talk—partly their own talk—about patriotism, loyalty, etc., by the bunk that is meant only to fool labor and consumers generally. It looks as if they were straining after sincerity. Griffin, for example, editor of the Monterey Peninsula Herald, has always betrayed a weakness for that impossible virtue and evidently he is spreading it all over the Peninsula. That's all wrong. Witty, "wise", reasonable, yes, but never

in earnest—not in our game. No, we must keep our eyes on the ball, which is private profits, profits, profits. Principles and ideals are for the lower classes; the upper classes, we are practical people and our President must represent us. When we hold a Chamber of Commerce meeting in Washington it is only to tell him close up the things he should hear and heed. No. Before Griffin starts anything like that, he should 'phone me. He knows I can tell him what wrongs have to be made to look right in our world. I would never betray him as his own conscience does so often.

REMEMBER WHAT I wrote a while ago? That Chester H. Rowell, the editor of the San Francisco Chronicle—not the paper, but the editor is a liberal, a real, old-fashioned liberal, one of the very few left in California. He, too, is having a hard time of it; can't be one every day, but every now and then he comes out as he did the other day (May 4) with a correct, liberal editorial on a moot subject that is beyond the capacity—that is outside the comprehension of most modern editors, reporters, correspondents and readers, and so clears the air for real criticism. In this editorial Rowell points out that it is not the United States Government that the Communists would overthrow, it is only the capitalist, private-profit-inspired, nasty business system. When then a prosecutor thunders at a witness in court the terrible question: "Do not you teach and believe in the overthrow of the U. S. Government?" said orator is making a popular ass of himself. So, too, with ignorant, educated, superior, vigilante Citizens when they get excited and overwhelming on the same blind error. It took Darcy, the Communist leader, hours at Sacramento to correct that common error, and even then the prosecutor and his minions could hardly get it. My muck-raker's answer would have been:

"No, no, it's not the government the Revolution wants to blow up. That can be left to fall by itself. It is you and your corrupt business the world of men is after."

Mr. Rowell puts it all in a nice, reasoned, very clear style for liberals to read and read again. And so proves that he can enlighten nobody but a reasonable man who understands English and can throw up a window in his sealed mind.

SENATOR BRONSON CUTTING, Republican Senator from New Mexico who so unnecessarily lost his life in an airplane accident, was one of America's few politicians who rose above the corrupt politics of the day. He was a man who proved that there is something in the word "gentleman". Poised, quiet, dignified, he had an old-fashioned liberal attitude, so old-fashioned that when he said "freedom of the press", for instance, he really meant it. He sponsored and acted on the non-censorship of books in Congress and asked Spud Johnson to get out a special issue of his little paper in New Mexico, *The Laughing Horse*, with contributions from wellknown writers opposing censorship. Cutting stuck by his guns and pushed and backed this action. Though a Republican, he was one of the few liberal voices left in Congress who meant with quiet determination every word he said.

He could listen, too. On a trip to Soviet Russia in the summer of 1931, he used to sit or walk quietly around, using his eyes and ears, saying very little, taking in all there was and withholding his comment until he felt he understood and had digested what these people were trying to do. He neither raved nor condemned prematurely: he used his knowledge

and culture, his quiet, observant mind to try and grasp this new and different culture. He was not offended by its newness and difference; he wanted to understand it. In a different period of history Bronson Cutting might have been a statesman.

REMEMBER MRS. BLACKMAN? Mrs. Carrie Blackman? A piece of sunshine that flashed around town here for years. Well, she died this week, died cheerfully as she lived. She knew she was going, and still she made jokes about it, and smiled and even laughed. That's a triumph. I'd like to get away that way, leaving everybody in tears while she laughed. Yes, that's the way to end a happy life, with a happy death. Leaving all suffering behind where it belongs, for the mourners. I never liked Mrs. Blackman's garden, laid out so that it cost no work, not a day, not an hour of care, and yet it looked all right. She painted, she played the piano, but only for her own pleasure. She did everything like that. And so she died. I never had sense enough to envy her before.

SOVIET RUSSIA and the rest of us in the Western world will gradually understand one another less, not more. We are spreading apart on an acute angle.



THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER SPEAKS

BEGONE! ye canting fools, begone!
And let my ashes rest;
Nor lay your vandal hands upon
The dust ye dispossessed.
Off with the lies that oil your lips,
Your unrepentant tears,
Before the judgment lightning whips
Your devastated biers.

You lie who boast that I was brave!
You know, alas! full well
That I was but a coward slave
Who fled your frenzied hell.
You lie who say it was my will
To give my life away,
You, who had sent me forth to kill,
Some other slave to slay.

Out with your flaunting of the flag!
Your fawning on the State!
Yours were more fittingly the rag
Whereon the pirates wait.
Back from my bones your bloody feet!
Back from my tomb your eyes!
Make fast and far your shamed retreat,
And spare the dead your lies!

—ROBERT WHITAKER

ORGANIZED LABOR AND CRIMINAL SYNDICALISM

BY ELVAR WAYNE

WHAT are the prospects of getting the California State Federation of Labor to unite in the drive for the repeal of the vicious Criminal Syndicalism law? If this law is to be wiped off the statute books, the widest possible united front and mass pressure are necessary; and if the politically potent State Federation of Labor could be enlisted in this drive, the prospects of success would increase tremendously.

One might suppose that a law, which is so viciously anti-labor as the Criminal Syndicalism act, would cause the California Federation to wage a militant campaign for its repeal. Unfortunately the opposite is the case. A survey of Labor officialdom's position in regard to this law reveals a history of evasion, betrayal, defeatism—the rankest sort of treachery against the working class of California.

It is true that when the Criminal Syndicalism law was passed, in 1919, the Federation officially pronounced against the bill's enactment. It is probably true that labor officials had some fears that the law in extreme cases might be used to crush strikes which they led. But it is charged, and subsequent events support the accusation, that the law's passage was unofficially supported by Labor officialdom with the tacit understanding that the law would not be used against "bona fide" trade union members. Of course, it was necessary, for the sake of publicity, to come out against the passage of the Kehoe Bill defining criminal syndicalism.

Paul Scharrenberg, Labor lobbyist at Sacramento, wrote before the bill was passed:

Aimed especially at the I. W. W.'s it seems almost certain that the latter measure can be and doubtless will be used against bona fide labor organizations whenever they resort to the strike and the boycott. A proposed amendment guarding against this impending danger was rejected in the Assembly.

Nearly a year later, after the law had been used to indict and convict scores of Wobblies and a few trade union members, official indignation against the Kehoe Bill was still evident when the San Francisco Labor Clarion took Senator Kehoe to task in an editorial.

In spite of brief and occasional protestations, there is much evidence for believing that the Federation's officials aided and abetted the passage of the law and that they were assured of immunity from its application to their trade unions. Among the reasons advanced supporting this contention are the following: (1) Practically, the State Federation has no real fear of the law because of its political influence, though theoretically it opposes the law; (2) bona fide trade union members have been indicted under the law without receiving official aid; (3) the Federation officially has refused to support, financially or otherwise, groups working for repeal of the law; (4) during the period of the most active persecutions of the I. W. W., particularly in Los Angeles, labor councils officially supported and took part in the activities of "Red"-baiting groups such as the American Legion and other vigilante organizations;

(5) the official stand since the passage of the law has been one of vacillation and evasion; and (6) official publications have ignored almost completely the law since its enactment.

It must be remembered that when the Kehoe Bill was passed, the "Red" scare which was a consequence of the World War was at its highest pitch. No one feared and hated anything that smacked of bolshevism more than organized labor which was desperately trying to convince the public that trade unionism was not "un-American" in the face of Industry's campaign for the "Open Shop". In California, the Industrial Workers of the World were very active, and in addition a strong Rank and File movement was causing the State Federation of Labor no end of misery and fear. Paul Scharrenberg had personal grounds for passing legislation that would outlaw the I. W. W. In his own union, the Sailor's Union of the Pacific, the Wobblies were making a strong bid for control, and later, through their influence, succeeded in ousting him from the editorship of the *Seamen's Journal* for a year. Scharrenberg's duplicity in regard to the Mooney case is notorious. In regard to the Criminal Syndicalism law, there is no particular reason for assuming that his opposition to it was greater than his fear of losing his job, and his hatred of the Wobblies. One might reasonably assume that he desired the law's enactment as a weapon to crush any opposition within the ranks of labor which threatened the entrenched officialdom of the Federation.

Several rank and file members of the American Federation of Labor were indicted under the Criminal Syndicalism law, but they were given no aid by the California Federation which took the position that it was necessary for one arrested to prove that he was expounding the principles and policies of the American Federation of Labor. There is no record or evidence to show that the Executive Board was even interested enough in these cases to conduct an investigation of the trade unionists' activities in order to determine if they were eligible for legal or financial aid. That burden fell upon the Labor Defense League of California which was refused any support or cooperation on the part of the State Federation. One must assume that: (1) as long as the trade unionists arrested were obscure individuals they were entitled to no aid from the Federation; (2) that as long as arrests of trade unionists were uncommon, then there was no reason for the Federation to fear that they would become general and necessitate official activity; (3) that the Federation knew that the law was not designed to hamper their activities, and therefore there was little reason for becoming perturbed about unimportant workers; and (4) that the Criminal Syndicalism law was felt by the Federation to be a useful method of eliminating any trade unionist who might be guilty of rank and file activity.

In a letter written by the Secretary of The Labor Defense League is the comment:

We have been assured by people in touch with the situation that the Criminal Syndicalism law was about to be used against A. F. of L. strikes in Petaluma, but

that a sudden change in tactics was made and it was decided to proceed under other laws.

Although the California Federation had good grounds for opposing the Criminal Syndicalism law because it could be used to crush strikes, perhaps more easily than under extant laws, it knew that other laws could be used for the same purpose. Practically, then, the State Federation had little reason to fear the statute; *theoretically*, it opposed the law only because it might be used against trade union operations in which the Federation was concerned. Why then worry about a few isolated "radicals" within their ranks? To lend support to individuals accused of "revolutionary" activities might endanger the Federation's political stand. To defend anyone accused of sabotage might lead the public to believe that the Federation was insincere in its official stand against sabotage. The Federation was desperately trying to live down the stigma attached to trade union activity as a result of the bombings in the McNamara and Mooney cases.

Labor Councils throughout the state went to even greater lengths to demonstrate their purity of motives. In Los Angeles in the Central Labor Council, "There was not a dissenting vote in adopting the recommendation of the Executive Board that Labor is in accord with the American Legion's activity against 'the common enemy'." The "enemy", of course, was the Wobbly and the militant worker. And everyone knows the terroristic methods employed by the Los Angeles vigilante groups in 1919 and 1920.

While lending support to vigilantes was approved by Labor Councils, it is notable that no support from them was forthcoming when liberal and other groups carried on campaigns to bring about the repeal of the Criminal Syndicalism law. It is true that individual trade unions have given financial and other support for this purpose, but officially the State Federation has discountenanced such activity. Furthermore, one may search through the files of official Labor publications of the state and scarcely find a mention of the law. The exceptions only make the absence of comment all the more glaring. If the Federation was sincerely interested in having the law repealed, active propaganda against the law would be carried on, as it is in the case of other unfavorable legislation.

In making his legislative report to the Seamen's Journal, Paul Scharrenberg, as is customary in making such reports, lists "Some Things Labor Did Not Get". Significant is it that in this list there was no mention of the fact that Labor did not get any amendments to the Criminal Syndicalism Act when it was passed. And after officially expressing indignation over the bill introduced by Senator Kehoe, Scharrenberg goes on to say:

In addition to those referred to, Senator(s) Kehoe . . . (is) well worthy of special mention for willing and ready service frequently rendered in behalf of those who toil.

But perhaps the Federation's unwillingness to engage actively in a drive against the Criminal Syndicalism Act is best brought out by its official convention reports. Beginning in 1919 resolutions have been introduced urging repeal of the law, and the Federation has officially gone on record in favor of such resolutions. On two or three occasions it got Assemblyman Hornblower to introduce amendments to the law in the legislature. It is significant, however, that four Conventions took no official notice of the existence of the law. In 1929, 1930, 1933 and 1934 no official stand was taken, even though last year prosecutions had been revived in Sacramento.

At the 1920 convention of the California Federation, President Murphy said:

The Anti-syndicalist proposition failed to receive sufficient signatures to obtain a place on the ballot. The Executive Council of the Federation refused to endorse the initiative, believing that it would meet with certain defeat.

In the gentlest of terms, this attitude is both evasive and cowardly. We believe that an initiative will meet with defeat, therefore why do anything? Let us confine our efforts as usual to passing harmless resolutions and letting us, the Executive Council, in our superior wisdom, reason with a few legislators to please do something about this law which doesn't affect anyone but a few "bolsheviks" anyway. Even the Federation's efforts to amend the law were essentially selfish, since it was interested only in amending those sections of the law which might apply to Organized Labor, while other groups could be prosecuted as before.

After 1923, evidently the Executive Council ceased to worry about the law. Resolutions were still introduced at conventions and approved as a matter of course, and then forgotten until the following year. The Executive Council saw to it that every resolution calling for militant action and cooperation with other groups was amended so that everything was left in their hands to do as they saw fit about the repeal of the law. When, in 1930, prosecutions were revived for the first time since 1924, in Imperial Valley, the danger of the law was again brought to public attention. As before, the State Federation refused to cooperate with the Committee working for the law's repeal.

At the 1931 convention Scharrenberg reiterated the official defeatist, do-nothing stand of previous years:

The Criminal Syndicalism law was enacted to combat I. W. W. activities during the period of the World War. He [Scharrenberg] pointed out that the California State Federation of Labor had declared its intention to defend any member of any American Federation of Labor union who claimed he was prosecuted under the Criminal Syndicalism law . . . He favored repeal of the law, but questioned the advisability of using the Initiative and pointed to the fact that two previous Initiative campaigns had

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A Western Journal of Fact and Opinion

Published every Friday at Carmel, California. P. O. Box 1300
Telephone, Carmel 14

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Ten cents a copy. Two dollars a year. One dollar for six months. Twenty-five cents for one month's trial. Canadian: Two dollars and twenty-five cents a year. Foreign: Two dollars and fifty cents

collapsed for want of sufficient signatures.

Scharrenberg failed to point out, however, that probably the greatest reason for the inability of the previous campaigns to gather sufficient signatures was the refusal of the Federation to cooperate in this work.

It should be apparent that only the greatest mass pressure would be sufficient to remove the Criminal Syndicalism law from the statute books, yet the State Federation of Labor has always elected to remain aloof; in fact, it has sabotaged, by its continued inactivity and refusal to cooperate, all the campaigns which have been made in this direction. The conclusion is inescapable that the Federation of Labor since 1919 has

confined its efforts largely to ineffective resolutions and lobbying, and these efforts seem to have been made largely for the purposes of publicity and for quelling opposition which might endanger its position. As long as the California Federation is dominated by those officials and ideas which have emasculated concerted efforts to effect the law's repeal, it is very doubtful that the law can be repealed. And since the Criminal Syndicalism Law, which has been applied almost exclusively to radicals, is a potential weapon to put out of the way individuals or groups that might depose the present officialdom, it is certain that the Federation will continue its policy of inaction. In effect, this policy favors the retention of the law.



WHITE COLLAR DRIFT

BY ANTHONY WILBUR

I DRIFT toward Communism, and on the strength of that I am satisfied that at least a million American white collared men (and women) are moving in the same direction. Of course, I may be wrong. I may be a cracked voice in a wilderness, but let's give me a chance to argue against that assumption.

I have spent my life somewhere near the social and economic heart of America's white collar masses, and I believe that it is from a still somewhat central location that I now speak. I have always been a typical white collar herdling. I have never pushed discordantly nor lagged inharmoniously, but have kept to the basic rhythm that moves my kind for the simple reason that my nature knows no other measure. Therefore, if something with a proletarian swing to it is getting into what is above my white collar, it must be getting into what is above millions of white collars, for I have never, never before gotten the swing of anything to which the herd was unresponsive.

No, I cannot feel that I 'implicate' a million of my fellows on the flimsy evidence of a purely personal political trend. I drift toward Communism, yes; but with a goodly, goodly number, for if I drifted alone or with a fringe few I would do so shudderingly. I do not shudder. I move toward Communism without fear, and with the herdling's sense of security which can be inspired only by the intuition that he moves with vast numbers of his kind.

Of course, from our sinking ship of state, the white collar legions do not all take to the same lifeboat. Some fancy the Fascist craft, a frail speedboat down at the bow with munitions. Others huddle to the good raft "Hooey", believing that by virtue of its hot air compartments it just can't sink. Many cling to the cross (of baloney) flung to them by Mr. Coughlin. And there are other illogical and hastily constructed bottoms alongside with beamy eyed pilots each ballyhooing his secret chart to the Blest Isle of Plenty. So no wonder ten million white collars do not agree which hull they shall be saved in.

But it is unreasonable to assume that we are but a handful who cast a thoughtful glance to the Red Ark, who incline to

believe that it is of pretty seaworthy construction, who say (as yet but to ourselves), "After all, of all these blankety-blank emergency crafts available, this Red Ark is the only one that has been through really heavy weather."

I have another good reason to believe that millions "look to Russia". It happens that my personal political meanderings of the past twenty years coincide perfectly with the nationwide graph of white collar political movement. Is it unreasonable of me to assume a somewhat continuing coincidence? Look at my record: With millions I crusaded to make the world safe for Democracy. With millions, several years later, I found the European mess indigestible, and went on a diet of Normalcy and 100% Americanism. With millions I thanked God for making the Boston Police to strike, and for revealing to us (in that heavenly roundabout manner) the saintly wise Calvin. With millions I kissed the benevolent and enlightened hand of Big Business, swearing allegiance forever. In time, with millions always, I went to the polls with a sentiment in my heart for the boy from the sidewalks of New York, but let my head put down my X for the wise man who knew how to wangle two chickens for every pot. When the crash came I was one of the punch drunk millions who babbled, "We're awright, perfectly awright. Been living too high, wide and handsome, that's all. We'll come back through. We're young, live and learn. Bound to come back stronger than ever."

And when we didn't come back fast enough, I joined the hue and cry against the sob-sisters. We passed out crying towels, I remember. We gave the moral Ku Klux to anyone we suspected of sleeping without a smile on his face. Well, that didn't work so we took to philosophy with a dash of whizz bang; "After all, even our little Miss Prosperity has to go around the corner once in a while."

Then, as I recall, I went perfectly dumb for a time. When I found my tongue again it had learned a new national birdie anthem; "B-br-r-p! So she's still around the corner, eh? What corner?" From that it was only a step to the sheer radicalism of hopping aboard the F. D. R. Milkwagon of Human

Kindness that was setting out to find this forgotten fellow. I (and my millions) figured that with a wagon like that we'd soon find the corner our little Nell Prosperity was hanging out at. So we'd find Nell, pick up this forgotten person, and marry them off to each other. Then we'd all live like one happy family forever and forever.

But Nell had gone invisible on us or something, but that didn't bother our smiling milkman. He just put together a kind of frankenstein eagle and pumped its head full of all the omniscient gray matter in the country. And were we happy! me and my millions. We gave that blue bird the big push up, and away he went to heaven or wherever the hell our Nell was doing us wrong at. Then we put on rose colored glasses and did a big song and dance while we waited. And after forty days times forty nights, sure enough down came our eagle. And when we saw he was a crafty-eyed, greed-grounded buzzard, did we do our part pulling out his feathers!

Well, there you have the record up to date. You'll have to admit I wasn't the only Christian in that Pilgrim's Progress. You'll have to admit I've sniffed pretty close to the pack these twenty years. And now if I'm off on a new scent, getting a

strong whiff of Communism and learning to like it, finding it a not so un-American odor, don't tell me I've suddenly gone Lone Wolf because of a bee in the bonnet. If it's a bee in the bonnet, it's a bee in a million bonnets. If I begin to suspect that our little Nell is being held a kept woman in the Great God Greed's love nest of Monopoly, that suspicion must be circulating strongly above a mass of white collars. And if I begin to have an idea that the only way to get her back for keeps is by way of Communism, well . . . I simply could not have tuned in on such an idea if it were wave lengthed above or below white collar receiving range. So, to my satisfaction, it's me and at least a few of my millions looking to Russia!!

If it puzzles you that one who admittedly runs blind with the pack should be so sure of where the pack is going, let me suggest that one need not be very intuitive to get a very definite sense of direction and destination *when the pack's pace increases!*

And if you still doubt that a very, very ordinary intelligence can sense the direction of an accelerated mass movement, *how do you account for Hearst's jitters?*

+

TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS IN A NEWS ROOM

BY W. K. BASSETT

CHAPTER FIVE

EVERY young man, at some time or other, tries a little life insurance soliciting. When I got back to Oakland, after outliving my usefulness in Modesto, no newspaper city editors awaited me at the gates of the city with laurel wreaths in the form of jobs. In fact, I was a bit surprised to find that the Oakland newspaper offices, which included the Alameda county branches of the San Francisco dailies, appeared to have been getting along pretty well without me and, which was even more strange, had the idea that they could indefinitely continue to do so.

So I went into the life insurance business. I went in with hope and fervor, each about equally distributed. I was told that my gift of gab would be of particular value to me; that my convincing rhetoric would bowl prospects over in half the time required for their capitulation to the average insurance agent. I was fully convinced that here at last was my forte. I could look ahead to a life of ease and travel and general plenty when I was about fifty, because by that time I would have written so much life insurance that premium renewals would give me a steady income of at least a thousand dollars a month. This was going to be good. The World War had started that August, 1914, when I walked forth as a representative of "an old-line, legal reserve company, incorporated under the laws of the state of California," guaranteeing

paid-up policies after a number of years of premiums, cash return and loan values.

My policy had a whole page of little coupons on it, resembling bond coupons, and they were cashable, beginning after the insured had paid the second premium, or could be applied on the payment of premium, or could be entirely ignored, and thus would increase the face value of the policy on maturity. This was supposed to be something special that would help to do the bowling over I was to start. In fact, it was designed merely as a psychological stunt; it looked like something extra, but wasn't. All the companies provided a means for reducing premiums or adding to the face of the insurance, written in on the policy. In other words, my coupons were merely a pull-on stunt. They looked pretty exciting but were simply a part of the interest you were entitled to on the premium money you paid into the company.

Well, I went forth to sell insurance. I didn't sell any the first week, but I was told that no agent sells any for about the first month. I would probably start next week and thereby set a record. About then I attended a banquet of agents in San Francisco and recited a stirring poem concerned with "impossible" not being in the brave man's dictionary. I did it so well that the agents' manager was all the more certain that I would be the ranking insurance agent in the country before the next year was out.

The second week got me a policy. Actually. The office was

all excited when I telephoned the news across the bay from Oakland. If time had permitted there probably would have been a delegation in insurance uniform, or is there an insurance uniform? to meet me at the ferry. I was hailed with delight when I arrived at the insurance company's office. The excitement dimmed a little, but not perceptibly, when I announced that I had written a \$1,000 twenty-payment life for my own brother, and presented the \$5 as a part payment on the first-quarter's premium.

My brother never did pay the balance of that first premium, and I never sold another policy. I can't to this day understand just why I was a failure as an insurance agent. I could lay 'em low with my line of talk; I could get 'em crawling

to me with complete surrender in their eyes; I could even get the fountain pen firmly placed between the thumb and index finger of their right hands, but I COULD NOT get them, any of them, to write their name on the dotted line.

But I did set a record in that insurance office. It still stands. I took the first prize over a period of four months for being the most unproductive insurance agent the company had ever had, probably that any company had ever had. That period must be written off on the books of my company as a complete loss, a liability the like of which those gentlemen had never known, will never know.

(To be continued)



MURDER IN STOCKTON

BY TOM KROMER

THE Stockton Warehouse and Cereal Company workers strike is over, mediated by the Federal Labor Board at San Francisco. It was a great victory for labor, shrieks out the local press, and editorializes to the effect that "life is a serious business of give and take", and "you know there is an employers' side to this thing, too". Striking warehousemen, who have been earning from \$16 to \$18 a week for 48 hours' work, asked for approximately \$25. The mediation board just couldn't see this, but magnanimously countered with shorter hours and a common hiring hall for all warehouses so the workers wouldn't have to walk so far when they were hunting a job. It was a typical Labor Victory as doled out by the average mediation board.

The strike was called on April 12 with a few of the 350 workers peacefully picketing the plants. On the 15th the City Council, one of whose members, R. J. Wheeler, is fortuitously secretary to the Merchants, Manufacturers and Employers Association, gravely decided that "there now exists a situation engendered by certain trade disputes which threatens to interfere seriously with the orderly conduct of business of all kinds, and which threatens to cause great disorder and many breaches of the peace". With this threat of a breach of the public peace by a handful of pickets, the council mobilized the entire city police force around the threatened warehouses, and in order more fully to cope with the menace, hired fourteen special deputies, later augmented to forty, to aid the police. Probably to heighten the feeling of camaraderie between the two protecting factions, the salaries of the deputies, amounting to more than \$200 a day, was taken from the Firemen's and Policemen's pension fund.

There was no stopping the City Council in the face of a breach of the city peace. On the same day they passed the notorious anti-picketing ordinance, "prohibiting assembly for the purpose of preventing workers from going to work, prohibiting the preventing of any person patronizing any business place by means of compulsion, coercion, threats, intimidation, acts of violence or fear, use of gestures or loud and unusual noises". This measure was passed unanimously to "protect

the strikers as well as the employers".

On the following day scabs were escorted in from Lodi by the police and escorted back again in the evening. This was kept up as long as the strike lasted, no doubt to protect the strikers. The menace at this time consisted of some carpet tacks strewn on the road which were the cause of several punctures to police tires. It is to be hoped the special deputies helped the police change these tires in appreciation of the pension fund.

Within 24 hours organized labor had 1700 signatures to a petition for a referendum on the anti-picketing ordinance. The City Council, backed by City Attorney Quinn, piously informed the voters that a referendum could not be invoked in the face of such a menace to the public peace. Labor clamored for the resignation of Wheeler from the Council, claiming his association with the M. M. and E. tended to prejudice his actions on the council. Mr. Wheeler refused to resign and implied that labor itself must be prejudiced even to hint such a thing. He is still on the City Council.

On April 27, Ray Morency, vice-president of the Warehouse Union, walked toward a car halted in front of a warehouse. It was driven by Charles Gray, son of the owner of the Gray Trucking Company, and it was Morency's intention to ask Gray to cooperate with the strikers and stop hauling produce from the plants involved in the strike. When Morency was still five feet from the car Gray pulled out a pistol and killed him. At the time the strike started Gray already had two permits to carry Colt revolvers. He applied for another permit to carry a Mauser after the strike started and got it. Officials absolved themselves of all blame, showing they had canceled his other permits when they permitted him to carry the Mauser. With the entire police force and forty deputies to "protect the strikers", Morency had not thought it necessary to apply for a gun permit.

There was no police escort at Morency's funeral, the biggest in the history of Stockton. Three thousand members of local unions and sympathizers, augmented by additional numbers from the bay area, deciding that Stockton police protec-

tion was a dangerous thing—for strikers—marched through the street with Morency's body at their own risk.

The local press in the form of the Stockton Independent, had this to say editorially on the same day the entire city was in mourning for Morency's murdered;

The quiet of Sunday morning can be utilized no better than in forgetting the unpleasant things of the week and recalling those that have been good.

Speaking from a barrel top in a New York street the night after President Lincoln's assassination had plunged the country into despair, James A. Garfield told his hearers, "God reigns, and the Government at Washington still lives."

even so. There are so many fine people in the world, that we can well afford to forget those who annoy us. Times could be so much worse, that by comparison, we are in the midst of prosperity.

In spite of the Depressionists, the clouds are rimmed with silver; there are rainbows everywhere if we will adjust our mental "specks" to see them, there are friends and neighbors and patriotic folk all around.

And every personal problem may be solved by patience, effort and faith in ones self.

No doubt this was a great spiritual blessing for Morency's widow and two children.

MUSIC

EDITED BY
SIDNEY ROBERTSON

WITH the passing of Proposition No. 3 on May 2, San Francisco triumphantly moved out of her musical doldrums to establish the San Francisco Symphony as a civic enterprise. One-half cent on every hundred dollars of assessed valuation, amounting to about \$35,000 at present, goes to meet the annual Symphony deficit, continue the employment of its 115 musicians and place San Francisco first among municipalities to assimilate music in its cultural civic responsibilities.

THE San Francisco Opera Ballet's gala night at Memorial Opera House, May 15 and 18, is most promising and we are grateful that Adolph Bolm recently refused a tempting offer from the Colon Theatre at Buenos Aires so that he might continue as ballet-master of the San Francisco Opera Ballet.

It is fitting that Bolm has chosen *Scheherazade* for the opening number of the program as his name is inseparably linked with Serge Diaghileff during those brilliant days when the ballet, *Scheherazade*, was created and utterly amazed the Paris of 1909 with its barbaric decor, abandoned choreography and breath-taking score.

Perhaps no ballet in Diaghileff's repertoire achieved greater popularity than *Scheherazade*. The public responded at once to its "Arabian Nights" atmosphere and setting. The costumes by Bakst were like nothing ever seen in Western Europe before; Fokine's dramatic pantomime working into

an orgy of frenzied lust at the climax was frequently branded by many as too brutal, though nobody denied its intense, masculine beauty. But in later years when Diaghileff considered reviving *Scheherazade* he said, "It would have to be with brighter colours. Memory has made it all seem very vivid, today those same colours would seem drab." Bolm has remembered Diaghileff's words and San Francisco will witness a transformed *Scheherazade*, fundamentally based on the Diaghileff conception, but with many new touches both in the choreography and *mise en scene*.

In contrast to *Scheherazade*, Manuel de Falla's *El Amor Brujo* will be given, starring Vicente Escudero, who having lived the major portion of his life among the dancing gypsies of Spain, should give an incomparable interpretation of the avenging "shade" who haunts his former betrothed, Candelas, (to be danced by Carmela who won instantaneous approval by her work with Escudero at the Memorial Opera House several seasons ago) and is frustrated in his supernatural attempts to separate her from her new lover. This will be the first performance of *Love, The Magician* in San Francisco, and judging from Los Angeles reviews of Escudero's recent work there, one is justified in expecting a memorable evening.

In addition to these two large works, three choreographic interpretations of Bach by Bolm are to be presented.

Gaetano Merola will conduct the orchestra for the entire production.

ALAN CAMPBELL

THERE follows an extract from a letter from one of Schoenberg's pupils in Pasadena, a young man better prepared technically than most and of mature will, able to absorb himself in this work with a keen intelligence for its meanings, its flowerings, its limitations. He has acceded to the music editor's request to write about Schoenberg from time to time, in an effort to bring Schoenberg a little closer than hitherto to those who care about his work.

"Schoenberg and his pupils form the strongest school of music that exists today. Each contact with him is like an electrical stimulation of growth, so that, if you are a pupil, you are a plant, with roots that reach firmly and fundamentally into rich earths like Bach, Mozart, and then, accelerated, you unfold like one of those moving pictures of plant life.

"He loves his pupils. Here in southern California he has been (he would not say it) afflicted with a motley group—of teachers, for instance, who want some hints: one of them said last week after an idea Schoenberg expressed, 'That's worth the whole price of admission!' At her next class it'll be a simple matter to fill up an hour or so with a few elaborations of his idea.

"Some come to him for perhaps one lesson or at most two. These are the only ones who disturb the master. He knows that in order to teach and to learn, one must take time. He strives to discover what the pupil knows and then to give him what he doesn't know. Whereas most people like to be taught over again what they already recognize.

"There are a few who come to Schoenberg thinking: 'Here is precision and discipline.' They are perfectionists. They also are surprised. With them Schoenberg becomes freely romantic.

"And half of them think: 'There's no doubt of his knowing music thoroughly and completely; but then he's sterile when it really comes to composition. Cerebral.' One teacher asked, 'What inspired you to write your Third String Quar-

tet?" The answer was a puzzled, un-understanding look, and then a consultation with the interpreter considering the possibility that he had misunderstood words. She changed the question: "What was your idea; what did you have in mind?" And somehow his answer left her in turn puzzled: "A musical idea!"

"Someone said: He is an old man; that's all.

"Another said: He's one of those whom you feel, even if your back is turned and he comes in quietly.

"I repeat: He loves them all. This is part of greatness. He is strikingly humble. I believe, however, that this is the other side of a surpassing pride, the pride of a prophet. Moses is in his blood."

—David Barth

BOOKS

STILL LEARNING

I CHANGE WORLDS, by Anna Louise Strong. (Henry Holt & Co.) \$3

(Reviewed by Lincoln Steffens)

NEWSPAPER reporters are what they are, which is satisfactory to our newspapers because they don't learn from their own stories. They see something, report it and go on to the next bit of news. There is typically no continuity in their lives, no accumulation of knowledge into wisdom. That's what's the matter with us. And I can say that bluntly here because I have in book form two exceptions to illustrate and soften what I mean.

The first of these is Anna Louise Strong's "I Change Worlds". Anna Louise came through here a year or so ago and, in the course of our talk, asked casually what she should do next. She was asking herself, no doubt, but I was thinking of the reporters who teach and report, but never learn and I suggested that she write her autobiography. I broached the idea because an autobiography would force her to notice what she had learned and was still learning—not only about Russia.

The last time I had seen Miss Strong on the job she was at the end of a general strike in Seattle. That had failed, of course, and she ached to know why and what next to try. I bade her go to Russia, where they had just had a general strike that succeeded and was gone over into a revolution. A continuation, you see, of a general strike that did not fail. She went, and the book I was asking her for was a narrative of the LEARNINGS by a defeated general striker from a lot of successful general strikers. If I got it I would learn for myself (and you) not only what they did that was wrong at Seattle, but also what she, a conscientious American citizen and labor skate, would have to learn to live and work under a new, a Communist, civilization. That should clear up many false ideas in all our heads, ideas and errors we all suffer from.

Well, Anna Louise has done it. She went home to Russia and began to narrate and, therefore, to note the difference between living under our civilization and the Soviet system. She sent me chapters as she did them. And I could see she had the idea, the scheme. It's in her book, an interesting, suggestive, a most revealing book. She tells with illustrations the differ-

ences, sometimes hard to get, between the two cultures, the two civilizations. Sometimes they were so slight, so enormous, that she had great difficulty grasping them. Her struggle with the dictatorship, for example, is still going on. She founded the *Moscow News* and was the editor, but she knew that, of course, she had a boss—only she couldn't always find him. She wanted a boss; a woman, she yearned for a boss. And there was none. Finally Borodin, the Communist leader from China, was made head of the *News*, and she was relieved. But dodgast it, he never seemed to boss. When she appealed to him to boss her and the paper, he smiled and bade her go on with the job, asking her whom she consulted with when in doubt. She told him that she often consulted with a couple of party stenographers in the office or ran up town to some party friends.

"Well," he said, "then they were your bosses." And she was mystified. He explained that her boss was whoever gave advice she took, and when she pleaded, "Why won't you tell me what to do?" he told her what I am not sure she has got now. He said that they on that paper were all still looking for the dictator and had not yet found him, because they had not yet found out just how to tap and listen to the readers of the *Moscow News*.

There are many, many other confusions in an American, a capitalist mind cleared up by Anna Louise's long experience in Soviet Russia—on the job. She has learned things Americans in Russia are still struggling with in their letters. She herself is still learning. She has "got" a lot; her mind is part Russian, but the truth is, the literal, stunning truth is that that civilization over there is as different from ours as the Greek was from the Christian civilization, and nobody can utterly "get" it. And the old Bolsheviks and worse still, the students of Russia who were born after the Revolution and the present officials in Russia are hardly able to communicate with us. When this year Anna Louise Strong came along here with her book all printed and done, and asked me for fun "Now what shall I do next?" I advised her to go back and learn and report more of what we are going to think and say when we have got all the profit and graft out of the business of living.

The other book is "Personal History" by Vincent Sheean. This remarkable man was a rebellious student at Chicago University who went to Paris as a regular correspondent, reported the Peace Conference with scorn that stuck and then traveled all over the world, not only reporting it, as I say learning for himself. Learning. He carried the news as observations from one story to another, believing his own stuff, and so turns up with a book of learning, so well written that everybody can get something out of it. But I must come back to this remarkable man, and his book, some later day. All I will add now is that everybody I persuade to read "Personal History" thanks me, convincingly.

THINKS HE'S THIRD-RATE

AN EXPERIMENT IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY, by H. G. Wells. (Macmillan Co.) \$4

(Reviewed by Paul Archer)

H. G. WELLS conceives of his biography as the story of the contacts of a brain with its environment. He avers that his is a third rate brain. The experiment he records is the successive reactions and developments of that brain through sixty-eight years of worldly existence. It is a fascinating tale. If this was an ordinary brain to start with, in the course of

development it accomplished extraordinary things. This should make the reader with an ordinary brain ashamed of what little is generally achieved by a third-class thinking apparatus.

Wells' energy was prodigious. His beginning was in the humble circumstances of a crockery dealer's son. His mother was a lady's maid. Wells records the intimate details of the struggle out of these sordid surroundings. Enforced confinement from a broken leg gave him opportunity to indulge his taste for reading. His first writing was painful and followed an urge to earn extra money, rather than to express himself. Three-quarters of the book are taken to record his struggle to arrive as a man of letters.

Somewhere in the course of the growth of his brain, a conflict arose—a battle between Wells the artist and Wells the reformer. Just when this appeared is not apparent. He early acquired a keen sense of economic injustice, engendered no doubt by the adversity of his own circumstances. His solution for the existing evils is expressed in the final chapters of the book under the general heading, "The Idea of a Planned World".

To my mind, Wells has merely glimpsed the social forces which are rocking the economic foundation of modern society. He either lacks the courage of the insight to see these forces through to their logical conclusion. He postulates a utopian planned civilization based on state capitalism; through a slow evolutionary process of re-education. In his own words, he believes, "there is a major mass of human beings ripe for a common understanding and common co-operation in the preparation of an organized world-state". Regarding the mechanism by which this major mass of mankind can get together to initiate and establish this utopian world-state, Wells remains both evasive and vague.

SUCCESION OF ANECDOTES

MOSCOW CARROUSEL, by Eugene Lyons. (Alfred A. Knopf) \$2.75

(Reviewed by Jim Durant)

THIS book by the ex-correspondent of the United Press in Moscow, gives a succession of anecdotes of Moscow intended to present a cross section of Soviet life: intellectuals and tourists, foreigners and writers, girls in love and girls at work, Moscow at play, Moscow at the theater, Moscow in its leisure hours, Moscow learning, discussing, joking, building. . . . The anecdotes are lively and superficially they seem to cover the ground.

But the author has lived in the Soviet Union six years, has looked, and not seen. He has so selected his stories that the reader gets a picture of malcontents and parrots, orthodox hundred percenters and frightened renegades of varying shades, from those who say "sh-sh-sh" in the tram-car to those who fear the GPU nightly and daily. These exist, and a foreign correspondent sees more of them than does the Russian citizen. But it is a little like what a story of America might be from the viewpoint of a Department of Justice agent. What the G-man sees, the dope peddlers, the Dillingers and Baby Face Nelsons, the jail-breaks and betraying "molls", the bloody battles and squealing criminals, all are America: but there is something else, too.

In the Soviet Union there are also lively, intelligent, hard-working and hard-playing people, who are sacrificing willingly for the sake of something they care about deeply, that is 'not a barren "Marxian formula" to them. Eugene Lyons

never forgets his supposed American audience that would like to have him show them the absurdity of these ridiculous Communists. And so, while his stories are often amusing and jovial, they are rarely really enlightening.

The chapter on Stalin, however, is vivid and to the point, and gives a coherent picture of this leader.

The book is illustrated with 78 beautiful photographs.

AMAZING AUTOBIOGRAPHY

PERSONAL HISTORY, by Vincent Sheean. (Doubleday, Doran & Co.) \$3

(Reviewed by R. A. Kocher)

THE subtitle of this book is "Youth and Revolution: The Story of One Person's Relationship to Living History". I can give only one person's reaction to this book but I wish I could convey that with such persuasion that everyone would go straight and buy himself a copy.

This amazing autobiography begins with the personal experience of what at first seems an average American youth at an average American university. Then Sheean spends a year as reporter on a New York daily, after which he goes to Paris, Lausanne, Geneva and Madrid as foreign correspondent. These two years are packed with exciting adventure. But adventure alone can be dull reading. Sheean gives color and gusto to the telling of an absorbing tale of the unfoldment of a personality in the thick of many world events. In 1924, still in his early twenties, he goes to Morocco, where native tribes under Abd-el-Krim are rebelling to establish their independence from the Spanish yoke. From Morocco to Persia, thence to Moscow and China. Sheean was present in 1927 at the height of the Cantonese revolutionary movement. It started in 1923 under Sun Yat-sen, culminating in the taking of Shanghai, Nanking, Hankow in 1927; now called the Kuomintang movement but shortly to collapse at Hankow under the leadership of Borodin. Up to this point, Sheean has recorded his observations and experiences with the detachment of a "good journalist".

Then a change began to come over this young reporter. "Here, for the first time, I began to approach the fundamental meaning of those vast disturbances that had fascinated me (in part unconsciously) for years—began to be able to discern the general under the particular, to take what Borodin called 'the long view' ". He made the acquaintance of Chiang Kai-shek, anti-revolutionary leader, T. V. Soong, Madame Sun Yat-sen, Borodin and an American girl, Rayna Prohme. This young revolutionary was then, and later in Moscow, to have tremendous influence in Sheean's spiritual and intellectual awakening to the larger concerns of mankind. The portrayal of the character of Rayna Prohme is one of the high levels of the book and she will remain in my memory as one of the great characters in either biography or fiction. In her, Sheean symbolized the metamorphosis of his own character. The picture given of Borodin, the leader of the Kuomintang, is likewise etched with master strokes. Summing up the influence of Hankow, Sheean writes: "It was a marvelous revolutionary spectacle, in which the courage and devotion of the Chinese agitators, the skill of the Russians, the high hope and frenzied determination of the workers, and the individual splendor of characters like those of Madame Sun Yat-sen, Borodin and Rayna Prohme, combine to give me a glimpse of a new world. . . . That the dead bones of economics and sociology could be animated with such irresistible life was something I would never have believed six months before in

Paris, when the principal event of the century seemed to be the anniversary performance of Pelléas and Melisande at the Opéra Comique."

On leaving China, Sheean renounced forever his own career as reporter. From now on he could not be a disinterested observer reporting facts; he must take sides—a partisan cannot be a journalist. In Moscow he again met Rayna Prohme. There were hours, days, weeks of discussion. He refers to this as the one and only argument of his whole life. He writes: "It was the last argument. At the end of it, when every element in the problem, personal and general, had been gone over a thousand times, and Rayna's resolution was still unshaken, we said goodbye"—she became ill the following day and in a few days was dead.

Sheean returns to Berlin, Paris, London and New York. The final and one of the most significant chapters of the book, relates his experience in Palestine in 1929, during the conflict of the Zionists in Jerusalem with the native Arab tribes. Sheean went to Palestine with no particular point of view, unless it was a sympathetic prejudice in favor of Jewish character. His mission was to study and report the working of the Zionist movement. He was financed by a Jewish publishing house. It was characteristic of him that he ended his stay by losing sympathy with the wisdom of the Zionist movement. He returned every cent of the money advanced and espoused the cause of the native Arab tribes. This Palestine experience for Sheean completed what he calls the processes of his "integration". "These things," he writes, "had to enter their place in my life, considered not as a man's unit of time but as a section of the world experience, in accordance with the inner logic that had governed my absorption of such living material from the beginning. This inner logic . . . demanded of every experience that it relate the individual to the general life of which he was a segment."

Having arrived with a clear conception of the "long view", Sheean is troubled that he cannot be a revolutionary. In a soliloquy he says, "But I am not a revolutionary. I can't do anything about getting the new machine. I—"

"You don't have to! All you have to do is talk sense and think sense, if you can. Everybody isn't born with an obligation to act. There are some people who can't act, who go to pieces under action, who can only think straight when they have plenty of time and no noise. But, if you see it straight, that's the thing; see what is happening, has happened, will happen—and if you ever manage to do a stroke of work in your life, make it fit in. That's all you have to do."

That is the essence of a mind that found itself. But read the whole thing. In doing so, if you have a mind not already "integrated", you will have a new experience of high adventure.

A MAN CALLED CERVANTES, by Bruno Frank.
(Viking Press) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Robin Howe)

FRANK'S foreword begins with a quotation from Thomas Carlyle which contains all the ascertainable facts about Cervantes: "A certain strong man fought stoutly at Lepanto, worked stoutly as an Algerine slave; with stout cheerfulness endured famine and nakedness and the world's ingratitude; and sitting in gaol, with one hand left him, wrote our joyfulest, and all but our deepest, modern book, and named it *Don Quixote*." There has been no letter or manuscript of Cervantes preserved; only a few legal documents, appeals, notes of hand, "residuum", says Frank, "of his continual pov-

erty." His life is as obscure as that of Shakespeare, who died the same month and year. So this book's reality is a wholly imaginative reality.

The colorful life of the story tempts one at first to consider he has in hand another adventure tale which Donn Byrne or, given somewhat more purple and gold, Rafael Sabatini might have written. Later one begins to perceive that its author falls now and again into a grimly detached strain which is anything but romantic and gives a steel-like, flashing quality to his perception of the world. Eventually, too, it is seen that Bruno Frank has given Cervantes a life molded by all the forces which live in the racial unconscious of a Jew. This, of course, goes to make it more interesting as the work of a Jewish novelist than as a recreation of the essential truth about Cervantes. He has drawn Cervantes as a man strong-hearted in adversity with the oak-like Jewish virtues and suffering under the age-old Jewish woes. Compare for a moment the way in which an Irishman, Byrne for instance, or a Frenchman like Maurois would have presented Cervantes and the racial quality will be plain.

This inclusion of the writer's deeper personality raises the book far above the ruck of biographical novels, once one ceases to demand an impossible historical veracity, for it results in a rare creative integrity.

TALK UNITED STATES! by Robert Whitcomb (Harrison Smith & Robert Haas)

(Reviewed by Robin Howe)

THIS is an account, in strict Americanese, of the making of an American labor leader. The reading of these 300 pages is scarcely less of a *tour de force* than the writing of them; but the protagonist, Matt Williams, is so bluntly and accurately portrayed that the book more than redeems itself in retrospect, once one is free of the strain of reading sounds which correspond literally to Matt Williams' speech. Here is a fair sample of the style: "See now, a funny thing is happening to me, I don't wanna take the rest of my life chewing about all this, and besides the same thing is happening to plenty others, but the short and the long of it is that it ain't happening sose you can notice it in the workingmen."

Williams' free education was acquired knocking about these United States as a fledgling bricklayer, proud of his trade, in search of work. The gradual steeling of his backbone in the course of the depression, to the point where he decides to "Talk out loud!" (The Wheel that Does the Squeaking is the One that Gets the Grease) is, however, so well worth reading about that evidently it is time we got acclimated to reading our own language as she is spoke.

CORRESPONDENCE

"GLORY" OF WAR

Editor, Pacific Weekly,

Sir:

For those who had eyes to see, the recent British Empire ball in Los Angeles was highly significant.

The United States guard of honor stood rigidly to attention; the British veterans marched in with colors flying, the

speeches were excellent; everything went like clockwork.

But at the entrance there sat in a chair a badly wounded soldier. He had obviously had one or two drinks. His mouth was hanging open; his eyes were staring, and his mind was blank.

The symbolism of the "glory" of war was perfect.

Maurice Talbot
(Major, late Royal Artillery)

Editor, Pacific Weekly,
Sir:

The *American Mercury* staff is on strike. On Monday, April 29, Edith Lustgarten and John Coffey, representing the entire office staff, presented the following demands to Lawrence E. Spivak, publisher of the magazine:

1. Restoration of last wage cut. (There were four cuts.)
2. Minimum union wage of \$21.
3. Recognition of shop committee (collective bargaining).

Mr. Spivak's response was to fire Miss Lustgarten, editorial secretary for eleven years, and Esther Leah Epstein, secretary to the publisher, who had been with the company for six years. The staff immediately walked out.

Mr. Spivak has been issuing lying statements to the press that his is a fight for democracy against sovietism. We know what sort of democracy Mr. Spivak is fighting for, and we have been appealed to, to lend the forces of the League of American Writers and of all other writers sympathetic to the cause of unionism, to show on what side the writers are.

We asked many authors to take part in an Authors' Day mass picketing, May 3 at 12:15, in front of the *American Mercury* offices, 730 Fifth Avenue; a large number responded. We request any of your readers who are interested to write or wire their protest to the publisher.

One more note—but an important one: the strike requires funds for phone calls, telegrams, stationery; postage for releases, letters and notices. Any contribution any of your readers can make will be gratefully appreciated if sent to the *American Mercury* Strike Committee at 504 Sixth Avenue, New York.

Sincerely,

I. Schneider
League of American Writers

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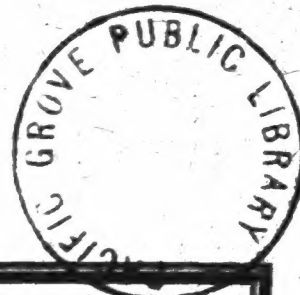
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